



## Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

— Making a positive difference through education and service —

December 4, 2003

Dear Agency Representative,

On behalf of the Missouri Service-Learning State Advisory Council, we invite you to be part of an exciting initiative sweeping this nation's communities and schools. This win-win program is called **Service-Learning**, and by becoming a partner in this movement, you can help today's youth develop an ethic of service and the desire to make a positive impact on our world.

Service-Learning programs are currently offered in many schools, colleges, and youth organizations within our state, including over 25,000 students in 38 grant sites. Service-Learning is different from community service because it utilizes academic skills, allowing students to apply their classroom studies to community problem solving.

You receive many **benefits** by partnering with schools or youth organizations in Service-Learning. You will have more opportunities to accomplish services associated with your mission, make positive changes in your community, and raise awareness of your agency.

**Becoming a Partner in Service-Learning is as easy as completing the enclosed application.** As a partner in Service-Learning, your agency information will be shared with schools and higher education institutions in your community so Service-Learning projects can be developed.

To assist you in the partnership, you will have access to Service-Learning mentors and trainings. Partners also receive a window decal and certificate. In addition, you will be given visibility in our **Observin' N' Servin'** newsletter which reaches over 1,500 persons including all legislators, superintendents, and community-based partners. You will also receive recognition as a Partner on our web site.

To explore the possibility of partnership further, I invite you to view the **Service-Learning Community Based Organization (CBO) Toolkit**. This on-line document contains principles of good practice, partner benefits, elements of a successful partnership, and much more. **Best of all it is free to you!** Print the toolkit from our web site at <http://dese.mo.gov>. Click on *Vocational and Adult Education* on left side of page, then *Service-Learning* on right side of page and click on the *Community Involvement* button.

We hope you will consider joining agencies such as **United Way, Catholic Charities Archdiocese of St. Louis, and St. Louis County Parks** in becoming a Service-Learning Partner.

Best Wishes

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### ***Service-Learning: The Community is the Classroom.***

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